

**Security Council**

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Identical letters dated 8 February 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

The international coalition led by the United States of America has carried out yet another barbaric attack, one that is consistent with its hostile policy towards the Syrian Arab Republic. At dawn on Thursday, 8 February 2018, coalition forces brutally massacred Syrian popular forces that were confronting the terrorist organization Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant (ISIL), which continues to maintain a presence under the protection of the forces of the so-called coalition and their proxy militias. The incident took place between the villages of Khusham and Tabiyah, in the north-east countryside of Dayr al-Zawr. American aircraft targeted popular forces that were clashing with ISIL fighters, killing and injuring dozens of the popular forces and causing extensive damage in the area.

This incident has once again exposed beyond a doubt the true purpose of the coalition and Washington's role in supporting the terrorist organization ISIL. A similar incident occurred on 17 September 2016, when the coalition carried out air raids against Syrian Arab Army positions in Jabal Thurdah, near Dayr al-Zawr, enabling ISIL to make progress and occupy the area. According to United Nations reports, the coalition has also deliberately destroyed some 90 per cent of the Syrian city of Raqqah, citing spurious pretexts. Innocent civilians are still buried under the rubble of the destroyed city. The coalition has also mercilessly and unjustifiably targeted Syrian infrastructure in other governorates.

This latest attack is a war crime, a crime against humanity, and an act of direct and overt support for terrorism. It highlights America's squalid scheme to undermine the sovereignty of Syria and the unity of its territory and people. America has used counter-terrorism as an excuse to establish illegal bases in Syrian territory. The American Secretary of State and Secretary of Defence have said that the American Administration wants its forces to remain in Syrian territory, something that flies in the face of international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the resolutions of the Security Council. It is now beyond question that their illegal presence is intended to provide support for the terrorist organization ISIL and outlaw militias; establish a safe haven for those groups; hinder any genuine and earnest endeavour to combat terrorism; and prolong the Syrian crisis in order to benefit America, Israel and their proxy terrorists and killers.

The Government of the Syrian Arab Republic wishes to draw the attention of the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council to these dangerous developments. It urges them to condemn the massacre; hold the international coalition

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responsible for it; compel the coalition to end its crimes and attacks, which have claimed the lives of thousands of children, women and old people, and destroyed infrastructure and public and private property; and demand that the coalition pay compensation to the families of the victims of this cowardly attack and of similar crimes. The Syrian Government once again insists that this illegal coalition must be dissolved, as its purpose is to protect terrorists and support terrorism. Whatever the cost, Syrian institutions and forces will continue to fulfil their responsibility, in order to prevent the American coalition from achieving its openly terrorist goals. The Government will continue to confront the terrorists of ISIL, the Nusrah Front and other terrorist organizations, as well as their sponsors, and to preserve the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Syrian Arab Republic and the unity of its people.

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as a document of the Council.

(Signed) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative